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FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9797
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI IMMEDIATE 0202
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1705
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SUBJECT: FINLAND SEEKS TOP UNODC JOB

REF: A) UNVIE 296
B) STATE 057099
C) UNVIE 159

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Finland's Ministry of Justice is considering naming its Director of International Affairs, Matti Joutsen, as a candidate to replace UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa, who is lobbying for an extension after his second term expires in May 2010 (Reftels). As several EU countries (UK, the Netherlands and Norway) have indicated their opposition to Costa's extension based on the two term-limit principle, the politicking for Costa's potential replacement can be expected to intensify. END SUMMARY.

The Joutsen Exploratory Committee

¶2. (SBU) In a July 6 phone call, Finland's Ambassador to the UN in Vienna, Kirsti Kauppi, told Charg that Finland's Ministry of Justice is considering announcing its Director of International Affairs, Matti Joutsen, as a candidate to replace UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa. Kauppi touted Joutsen's law enforcement credentials, exemplified by his work on the Crime Commission, where he supported efforts to combat violence against women. She added that Helsinki will soon decide whether or not to put forward Joutsen as a candidate, acknowledging that his lack of experience with drug issues was a potential weakness. Responding to Kauppi's query, Charg shared the U.S. view of opposition to a Costa extension (Ref B), emphasizing this is an "if asked" position. When Charg noted Swedish Ambassador Hans Lundborg's rumored interest in the post, Kauppi said it was her understanding that Lundborg was not interested in the business or travel associated with the position.

¶3. (SBU) Mission previously reported that the UK shared the US position on term limits (Ref A). At the closed session of the Major Donors meeting on July 1, Netherlands raised the issue of Costa's extension, and voiced its opposition. Norway seconded Netherlands' position. Both stressed the importance of upholding the two-term limit principle for senior UN positions, as required by UNGA resolution A/RES/51/241 (Ref B). However, they also seemed at a loss of what to do, noting the UN Secretary General (SYG) alone makes the nomination to these senior positions.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Mission has had contact with Joutsen on UN crime issues, and considers him to be steeped in the core issues of UNODC, especially crime control, but lacking the diplomatic and leadership skills required of an Executive Director to advance such issues. Mission will further inquire about Sweden's intention regarding Costa's position and would welcome insights from Embassy Stockholm. We also believe the SYG's push for gender balance will play a part

in his decision, should a qualified woman candidate come along. In any case, the politicking for the position, whether from Costa, or another candidate, can be expected to intensify. End Comment.